

June 29, 2003

6247 Narragansett Drive  
Lynchburg, VA 24502

Council Meeting of  
July 8, 2003

Agenda Item: 10

Pat Kost,  
Clerk of Council  
Lynchburg, VA

Dear Mrs. Kost;

This written request follows up our telephone conversation regarding the opportunity to get on Council's agenda for July 8<sup>th</sup>. I am making that request and I have enclosed 3 pages of information to be forwarded to Council.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Coleman  
239-8063

Date: June 29, 2003

To: Lynchburg City Council  
From: Barbara J. Coleman

Subject: Request that Council form a City-wide committee to implement the recommendations of the Senate resolution agreed to by the General Assembly during the 2003 session

Members of Council, in the resolution, the Commonwealth is planning a year long celebration of the Brown Decision. Each area is being asked to develop and implement a comprehensive celebration that includes all students, organizations, clubs and the community at-large. I wish to appear before Council to request that a committee be assembled to coordinate efforts being made in the city during the 2004 year of celebration.

Please find the resolution attached.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara J. Coleman

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 316

*Directing the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission to coordinate and plan the statewide commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision in the Commonwealth. Report.*

Agreed to by the Senate, January 31, 2003

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 13, 2003

WHEREAS, May 17, 2004, will mark a half-century since the United States Supreme Court delivered its landmark decision known as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), striking down *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896), and reversing the trend of law that up to that point supported the doctrine of "separate but equal"; and

WHEREAS, the unanimous 1954 ruling, which combined cases from Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, and Virginia, found that laws separating elementary and secondary students by race violated the constitutional right of African-American children to equal protection under the law and made public school segregation illegal throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, on the same day, the Court invalidated school segregation in the District of Columbia in a companion case, *Bolling v. Sharpe*, 347 U.S. 497 (1954), dramatically opening the doors of equal opportunity to countless numbers of Americans of color, challenging the traditional notions of segregation, and changing the public conscience to embrace and affirm human equality and the fundamental worth of every person; and

WHEREAS, to help celebrate one of the most important decisions ever issued by the United States Supreme Court, the President of the United States signed into law H.R. 2133, to create the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission that will plan and coordinate activities and initiatives to educate the public about this era in United States history, and advise the United States Secretary of Education regarding appropriate commemorative activities to recognize the constitutional right to freedom from racial discrimination in the public schools; and

WHEREAS, the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission is composed of representatives of the states of Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and distinguished Americans from across the country serving as commissioners; and

WHEREAS, Brown v. Board of Education gave birth to the Civil Rights Movement, an historic and evolutionary event unlike any other in the history of the nation that has been critical to ensuring justice and quality for all Americans, to which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is inextricably linked; and

WHEREAS, recognizing Virginia's role in this historic decision and its aftermath, and the significance of the ruling to Dr. King's enduring legacy, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission has already initiated plans and the groundwork to mark the 50th anniversary of Brown in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, due to Virginia's prominence in the Brown decision, many state and local agencies, organizations, public schools, museums, foundations, and institutions of higher education are in the planning phase to implement various programs, activities, and events across the Commonwealth in 2004 to celebrate the decision; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the Commonwealth note the anniversary of this landmark decision at a time when the nation has embarked upon the most sweeping education reforms in decades, and has been reminded that the nation's greatness and strength lies in the diversity of its people; and

WHEREAS, it is important that Virginia's participation in this national celebration be coordinated and conducted in a manner representative of its place in history; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission be directed to coordinate and plan the statewide commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision in the Commonwealth. The Commission shall (i) inventory the Commonwealth regarding planned commemorative events, (ii) confer and collaborate with the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission, the Robert Russa Moton Museum, the Brown Foundation, the Secretary of Education, the Superintendent of Public Education, the State Council of Higher Education, the Virginia Community College System, the Office of the Attorney General, the judicial system, local school boards, institutions of higher

education, local governments, legal and civil rights organizations, relevant federal agencies, the religious community, and other interested parties to plan, coordinate, and implement appropriate year-long activities and events leading to and following May 17, 2004, (iii) issue a calendar of events that includes all known national and statewide programs, activities, and events commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, and (iv) notify and seek the cooperation of all relevant parties regarding the provisions of this resolution.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of its progress in meeting the directives of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2004 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.